

HO MANUS - TROUPE, TOLEDO

720





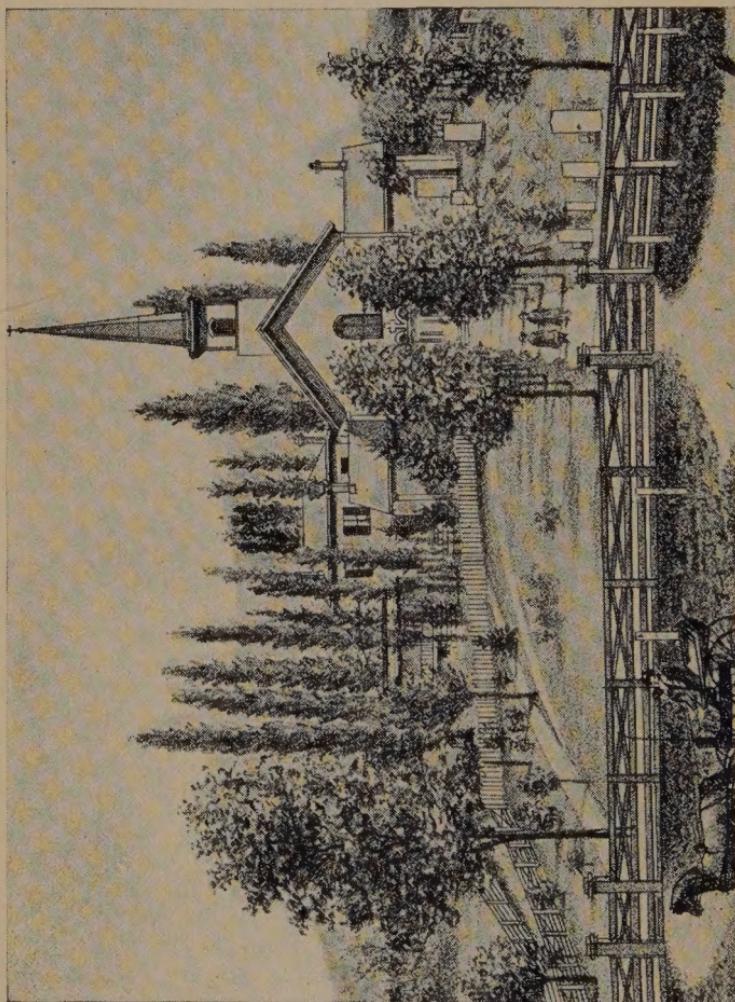












THE SILVER CREEK CHURCH OF THE '60s AND '70s

266  
B25  
K2  
C. S. L.

CORRESPONDENCE OF

**REV. LOUIS BAROUX**

MISSIONARY APOSTOLIC  
OF MICHIGAN

TO

**REV. M. J. DE NEVE**

SUPERIOR OF THE AMERICAN  
COLLEGE AT LOUVAIN

---

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

BY

**RT. REV. E. D. KELLY, D.D.**

AUXILIARY BISHOP OF DETROIT



# HISTORY OF THE POTAWATOMIES

BY A ZEALOUS MISSIONARY  
PRIEST

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

OF

## FATHER BAROUX

BY

### RT. REV. E. D. KELLY, D. D.

AUXILIARY BISHOP OF DETROIT



## INTRODUCTION.

Near by a sandy road some miles North of Dowagiac, Michigan, may be seen the Silver Creek Church, a pretty little red brick building which balances itself, so to speak, on the farther edge of a saucer-shaped cemetery. Over this grave yard the little edifice acts as a sort of watchful mother who has tenderly laid away her loving children for their long night's sleep after having first signed them with the Cross and Chant. Occasionally, the music of a Requiem or a Miserere floats out through the opened stained glass windows over the consecrated restful tombs. It means that some other child has wearied of the garish day and its good parent croons until earth's coverlet has been drawn

around the chilly form. "Remember man that thou art dust and unto dust thou shalt return."

Many pretentious monuments may be seen on the sloping hillside and hollow. Some good Irish farmers builded better than they knew in war days and when they gathered their harvests and got good "town" prices, they could add to their lands and became wealthy. When a member of the family died an expensive and showy monument was thought of as one of the necessary things, and as a result much money was expended by some people who could not think of offering a prayer for the repose of a departed soul. Crooked little graveled walks divide the family lots from one another. Wild brier flowers out into wreaths or crowns which link themselves in confusion over the mounds, and large weeping willows trail their frail, long-fingered branches on the piping blades of grass.

But there is no monument over the grave of him who made this situation possible. Father Baroux had planted both Christianity and Civil-

ization in this neck of the woods, he had struggled through, and endured with patience, the hopeless winters of the 50's and 60's, he had been the faithful shepherd of untamed flocks; he had been a pioneer in advocating religious education; he had willed his body to be buried in the little grave yard at Silver Creek beneath the shadow of the sanctuary which he loved and served through many years.

When "littla" Father Baroux died there were found those who aided in carrying out his last will and testament and he was buried side by side with the Indians and whites to whom he had brought religious peace and life. The Mission still contained many who remembered him, even if he had been in a distant place for years, and when the mortal remains of the good missionary father were brought in through the sand dunes of Silver Creek, Indians and whites seemed to vie with one another in showing respect and homage. The descendants of his "enfants des forests" loved him equally well with the Celtic

children who had drifted into these oak-openings from the waste and famine of Ireland.

The lack of a monument over the grave of Fr. Baroux became evident to me last summer when I passed through this district on an auto trip to Chicago. I motored through Hartford, Rush Lake, Watervliet, and the "Irish Settlement." I passed by the very house in which I was born and in which Father Baroux used to say mass. Then the auto was headed through Keeler, which is remarkable for its good roads and wonderful shade trees and we arrived at Silver Creek. There are a great many diamond lakes rosaried together in this wide district and it was a pleasure to follow up the string of beads so to speak, and count them o'er and o'er, a sort of pleasure penance on him who had not worshipped at the lakes shrine for many years.

One could not help thinking that if the roads had not improved much since Fr. Baroux's time the mode of transportation had. At certain seasons of the year Fr. Baroux had spent a whole

week on a sick-call to some poor Indian in the parish of Rush Lake. In places the road would be impassible on account of floods or deep mud, or possibly snow drifts. In such emergency he would appeal to the farmers who always helped out generously. Food was furnished, fences opened up, and a new pathway found through the fields. Today the sick call which is made by auto, trolley or train, demands no such sacrifices and indeed by means of the telephone we may sometimes get a neighbor to make the call for us, if he be not too particular.

But how erect that monument? That question came into my mind again and again as the speedometer told the miles. It was a question that overshadowed that of "tire trouble." Like Bauquo's ghost, it would not down. Shortly after this Father Laugel of Detroit, placed in my hands the extensive correspondence which Father Baroux had sent to the Rev. Superior of Louvain University, and which had been published in France in 1865. Immediately I said to myself,

why not translate this book into English, and with the proceeds, if there be any, erect a monument over the grave of this brave good priest-hero?

THE TRANSLATOR.





**REV. LOUIS BAROUX**

CHRISTIANITY AND CIVILIZATION  
AMONG THE POTTAWATOMIES  
OF  
INDIANA AND MICHIGAN

RIGHT REV. MONSIGNOR DE NEVE.

MY DEAR SUPERIOR:

Since receiving your letter about two years ago, I have frequently reproached myself for my silence. I have keenly desired on the one hand to satisfy your wishes by writing the history of the tribe of the Pottawatomies confided to my charge here in Michigan, but on the other hand it is distasteful to me to thus come out of my sweet retirement and exploit myself in the broad light of publicity.

I believe, however, that duty on my part impels me to accede to your wishes and entrust

to you the history of these poor savages. I must be mindful that in giving you this pleasure I am not releasing myself from a debt of gratitude.

> You, even you, have evangelized these dear children of the forest during my absence preaching to other people in the tropical East Indies; you have consoled them; you have visited them and your appearance in the midst of them was an unspeakable good fortune which they will never forget. Through the inscrutable designs of Providence I was destined after long suffering to return to Asia, to pass one year in France recuperating my strength, and finally to return to this mission which my enforced absence had made more dear to me.

And you, Monsieur le Superior, after having labored with such zeal in this so interesting Michigan Mission have left us but only to labor in a similar cause, the preparation of other missionaries in the American College of Louvain. If you are now far away from the center of your first Apostolic labors your affections continually

recall you here, and I appreciate the desires of your heart demanding fresh sacrifices in the interest of a country so dear.

In rendering this debt of gratitude I am only responding to the prayers of my Catholics who are happy because you have not forgotten them and who desire that you always keep them in your remembrance.

During your very short sojourn in America, it was easy for you, Monsieur le Superior, to understand and perceive at a glance the needs of our Missions in Michigan. You are now able to see what an extensive and fruitful field expands itself before the zeal of the missionary who desires to consecrate his entire existence to the glory of God. With me, during two years, you have visited my dear Catholics of Silver Creek and Nakanek-Kenbess. The piety of the Pottawatomies has touched you; their lively faith has made impressions upon you as I can see by your letter. It is necessary to understand the history of their persecutions, to see face to face,

the victims of the white man's double dealing, to consider well their patience and their saintly resignation, in order to comprehend the sublimity and nobility of these newly made Christian souls.

To accomplish properly the task you demand from me, time and reflection are necessary. Long drives and various occupations distract me in doing a work so long expected by you.

It is more than six years since I first came among the Pottawatomies. I was young then. I arrived in America with impressions more or less erroneous concerning the Indians whom we call the Red Skins. When I came face to face with these children of the forest I experienced an indefinable sensation and one which can not be expressed in any sort of language. When we left Europe we had strange ideas of savages! Our imagination represented them as barbarians. I often laugh at the simplicity of those who in 1848 believed in my country that my Indians had devoured me. To a great many people in Europe Indian or Savage is always synonymous with

MAN EATER. Indeed there are not in Michigan savages who would devour one, but there are nevertheless, in America 300,000 Indians or more, who are plunged in the darkness of infidelity. The very interesting letters of Father de Smet are full of knowledge on the conditions of these Indians. A great number of their tribes cultivate a dislike towards one another, they pursue one another with unrelenting hate; they are continually at war and threaten mutual destruction. We find a reason for these wars of extermination in the disparity of the tribes, and the vast solitudes of the forests formerly traversed by them.

They say in France that in 100 years this race of people will entirely disappear. That is not my way of thinking. The teachings of the Gospel will give them a new viewpoint and perspective and introduce them to civilization, and the race will perpetuate itself in the oncoming cycles. We have Catholic Indians whom we do not see decaying and race-suiciding any more than the Euro-

pean colonies transplanted to these far off shores. Superficial and unfounded opinions which the world conceives as incontestable truths only prove that the Europeans have a very limited knowledge of America.

One serious thought often gives me pain; it is to understand or comprehend the future of these American states where civilization has penetrated, and where we have 300,000 pagan savages in immense as well as distant solitudes. We have an abundant harvest but the Gospel workers are very few in numbers and the spiritual wants of the civilized states are so great that our bishops can not supply a sufficiently numerous priesthood. Hence some few Missionaries must take the initiative in the conversion and direction of these Indians in their remote and almost inaccessible districts.

I have been much disturbed by reading a book which was brought back from Washington by Simon Pokagon, one of my Indians. It is a complete exposure of the efforts of American

officials to propagate error among these savages. These proselyters show a zeal worthy of a better cause, while we Catholics, doing little or nothing, look on as the work of Satan progresses.

Is it necessary for me to indict Catholicism? No, a thousand times, no; that would be an injustice. For how long a time has not Europe generously sacrificed large amounts to the propagation of the faith and sent out missionaries in large numbers every day to carry the good news of the Gospel to the extremities of the world? Her generous sisterhoods have grasped the supreme wants of the Catholic world; they also have wished to associate themselves in this sublime cause; they wish to share in the merits of the work of Gospel propagation: associations are formed under different names to furnish ornaments and vestments to the poor churches of Europe and the missions of the world. One sees on every side in your country such apostolic zeal developing itself, shall I say, in ways that are indifferent? No, that is not my intention,

but I grieve to see that with all our zeal and all our efforts we are not able to do justice to the work. Thousands of these savages are starving, and no one is found to give them the bread of life; they are thirsty and no one is found to give them the refreshing waters of salvation. The number of missionaries is increasing no doubt but what is that for the whole world! At my arrival in 1846 we had 700 priests in the United States and now in 1862 there are 2,600 but what is that number in a country as vast as Europe itself? France alone has more than 4,000 priests many of whom see with grief the sterility of their labors. They have beautiful churches, which are deserted while we in our missions have pious

---

Note:—This prophecy of the future of the Indian seems impossible of fulfilment. He lacks the initiative, the balance and poise which centuries of civilization have given to the white man.

In 1913 the number of Catholic priests in the United States had increased to 17,945 and the Catholic population, according to Archbishop Ireland, to 18,000,000.

and fervent catholics but no churches. Wait patiently and courageously, I can see in the distance a brilliant horizon expanding. During the three years when we traversed together these forests of Michigan, we entertained ourselves with this subject; the remembrance is still precious to me and I love to recall all we talked about at that time.

Four years ago, as you remember, this part of Michigan which you have seen was a deep wilderness. You have traveled through these virgin forests for a whole week without finding any trace of civilization. The savages were the lords of the country. They then possessed all the vast territory in the South of Michigan and in the North of Indiana.

White men coming from the old world desired a still greater expansion of territory here. Their inordinate ambition could not be content with the possession of more than 300 miles of country and so the poor Indian had to submit to the law of greater force. Might is right where

no other principle is recognized; it was the survival of the fittest, at the expense of all justice. The Indian was compelled to sell, or have his land taken away from him by a presumed title which meant spoliation. Insignificant amounts were offered, promises made, treaties signed, but the whole transaction for the most part resembled rather a comedy than a serious act and the poor savage was finally forced to give up his forests, and to roam over the immense tracts of the West. If this forced exile had been planned with dignity, he would be fortunate, but the white man, from the old world, adds cruelty to spoliation by making an insolent and cruel soldiery accompany these unfortunate victims into their place of exile and to treat them with indignity. It does not astonish us today if the United States is receiving a fitting chastisement for these injustices!

They say it is better to see civilization prevail, and the forests cultivated, than to permit the Indian to be master of the forests and to lead the

life of a useless vagabond. I am perfectly of this opinion, but first of all make the savage appreciate our civilization. It is not by robbing him with indignity and chastising him with cruelty that he will appreciate us. The savage has in his conscience an idea of justice and rights, of falsehood and of truth. We have taught him the vices of civilization and instructed him by our actions to despise us.

Of late, in Minnesota, the Sioux would perhaps not have committed such cruelties if they had not previously been the victims of revolting injustices. When I think of the conduct of the Europeans in regard to these people, I blush at our haughty pretensions.

We believe ourselves called to convert them; our American agents during their visits take the liberty of preaching to them, wishing to make them appreciate our civilization, and in all their preaching there is *one moral only on their lips*. These agents are accompanied and followed by a large number of merchants and adventurers who

sell their goods, often of a questionable quality, to say nothing more, at fabulous prices. Here is one instance among many others which shows the profit made by one of these merchants whom I knew in Indiana. In his jewelry shop he had some needles which greatly aroused the curiosity of the savages. For the first time in their lives these childish people saw a great many attractive objects. They came to sell a portion of their land and to receive a certain sum of money ; just like children who wish to possess and to buy everything they see, they pressed forward to make their purchases. The crafty merchant knows their weakness, he knows that the savage wishes to have the object of his curiosity at whatever price it be ; then he asks an exorbitant price ; each needle is sold for a dollar, that is to say a little more than five francs. Some of the Indians, however, are amazed ; they cannot understand how so small an object can be sold at such a high price ; but the clever knave is not disconcerted ; he replies that the maker of needles is

dead and that these are the last there are in the world ; then all wish to procure some of them and the shop is soon exhausted. This is a sample of the thousand clever tricks resorted to by a great number of such adventurers, all of whom have made great fortunes. But Divine Justice sooner or later takes its course and ruin is inevitable as I have often seen in this country. Brandy is sold largely under these circumstances and the usual consequences are always disputes, blows and sometimes murders.

It is true, as I have said before, that Protestant ministers work diligently to establish schools ; they preach the Bible, each according to the inspiration of his imagination, but what result can come from this confusion of contradictory doctrines ?

My Pottawatomies were also obliged to suffer the same as the other Red Skins ; they had to see their lands taken away and themselves driven to the Western plains.

In 1827 an agent sent by the government of

Washington made the savages the first propositions. They were at that time divided into five tribes each having its particular chief. All the first propositions were rejected as the savages were wise enough not to be deceived by words and false promises. The agent seeing his efforts useless had recourse to another expedient which reminds one of the history of the foundation of Carthage from the first book of the Aeneid of Virgil, verse 366:

Moenia surgentemque novae Carthaginis  
arcem,

Mercatique solum, facti de nomine Byrsam  
Taurino quantum possent circumdare tergo.

He made a fine proposition to the savages. He promised them two hundred dollars, that is to say a little more than one thousand francs, for

---

Note:—The Colonists according to the classical story bought as much land as they could cover with a bull's hide. By cutting the hide into strips they got a generous site for their town. The legend in all probability arose from a confusion of the Phoenician "bursa" citadel, with the Greek "bursa," hide.

a small space just large enough to be covered by a buffalo hide; not suspecting any trick, these poor Indians consented willingly to the sale of this small space on such favorable conditions. The agreements were stipulated and signed on both sides and the agent prepared to take possession of his property.

The Red Skins could not understand the folly of the agent; they were not able to explain how a pale face, considered so clever, could pay a sum so enormous for a few feet of ground. They laughed at his simplicity to be so duped. Our sharp Yankee (American) laughed quietly to himself and prepared to play his trick. He cut the buffalo skin with care to reduce it to a fine thread of prodigious length; then with the aid of his accomplice he extended it in a way to make a circle of considerable size. The savages thoroughly dumbfounded were not able to recover from their surprise. "Taia"! they said to each other. "Taia"! "What do you say to that"? In vain they wished to protest. The agent set his

stakes, he was now the owner of the land. "What does he intend to do," said the savages among themselves. What use can he make of a little land lost in the woods? It was not any mystery for our Yankee. He alone knew his plan of attack. Gold and silver could not win the savages but he resolved to try another means. He arranged to build a house on the new property and become a landlord or rather an inn-keeper. He distributed whiskey or brandy in profusion and very soon his aim was accomplished.

Four of these savages fell into the trap set for them. They became intoxicated frequently and their will power weakened. Pokagon, one of the five chiefs had enough strength and courage in his character to despise these means of corruption. The agent seeing him immovable obtained a kind of badge for him from the president at Washington, but this did not succeed either. Our agent tries again with the four chiefs. He lavished brandy on them and these men under the pernicious influence of whiskey were very willing

to sell a certain portion of their land. Pokagon was indignant at the weakness of his compatriots, and his repeated efforts became powerless against the perfidious snares of our American. A longer resistance was useless. He was obliged to submit to sign that infamous treaty, of July 27, 1827, but he imposed one condition, that he be left in the country with the tribe which he governed. The agent did not wish to consent to this restriction but he could not conquer the obstinacy of Pokagon, and finally submitted to his wishes.

The first treaty was only a prelude to many others. They overcame the first difficulties. The government was patient and prepared the way for a treaty of much greater importance. The savages could not withstand the force of concessions. A larger tract of land was demanded; recourse was had to the same means. Brandy was poured out with profusion and the same results obtained. The second treaty was signed at Chicago the 26th and 27th of September, 1833.

Pokagon married one of his daughters to a catholic half-breed of Canada whose father was French and mother an Indian of the Ottawa tribe. This man, by name Mr. Mousse, often spoke of his religion to the Pottawatomies who were yet heathens and adored the Great Spirit whom they did not know. I can not do better than give you an idea of their religious notions in a language you know. "Bowaowchkagonc, Potatowennen, Debabadown, Chkoteh, Namkenelek, Watchipokchenan, Nimamautomam, Kijemonto, Tchohekennemacs, Tchakemenetok, Michpinyek, Kimentoke, Eiapowa, Euekawa, Ni-jaowenemegot, Gigetal, Ehassoinagok, Bababowennen, Eteceh, Maktehkah, Negot-Ekchessess, Tchakekomeianck, Mina, Kijemnito, Mehgowa, Kiskeponia, Deteness, Tcho, Nowoplemases."

"I believe I am sinful and that I shall see the flaming earth opening to swallow me. I adore the Great Spirit whom I know not; I adore all animals in my imagination and in my dreams believing they wish me well. I wish to develop my

conscience by fasting and sacrifices but I am lost in the deep womb of night."

I remark in the savages, whom I baptize, that they give evidence of their belief in the above formula of the Singwoa. Their religion has nothing fixed or permanent; they have confused ideas of the divinity; their perturbed souls are the victims of foul and strange illusions; their existence is miserable and worthy of compassion. Thus it is easy to understand how these men duped by a vagabond imagination conceive the desire of departing from this state of trouble and anguish.

Pokagon took advantage of the treaty to demand a priest and to stipulate that each year a sum of money should be paid to carry on a school and so provide for the civilization of his people.

Some weeks after the conclusion of the treaty the agent brought a protestant minister to the Indians to teach them the Christian religion. But Pokagon who had asked for a Black Robe (Mak-

takonia) was mystified when he saw the preacher with his wife and family. "The agent does not understand," he says, "I asked for a Black Robe who could communicate with the Great Spirit and not for a man, who like myself, is engrossed with the cares of a family." The preacher wished to show that he preached the same Gospel, believed in the same Redeemer, and had the same religion. But Pokagon was not again to be influenced and seduced, and remained so inflexible in his opinion, that the preacher was not successful. Furthermore Pokagon, intelligent enough to see that the rule worked both ways, in the case of himself and in the case of the minister with his family, said to him: "Since the savage is obliged to look out for the wants of his family, little time is left to minister to the wants of others. He has to bring up his children, to train them, to procure them situations, to overcome all obstacles; how under such circumstances is one fitted to give them religious instruction"? Pokagon finds it difficult to make the Indians under-

stand that such a man can not lead them to the Great Spirit. The new missionary persists again and again in his efforts, but in the end is forced to leave. If we consult the history of the savages for the last 30 years we always find the same disposition; they always prefer the Black Robes.

If the protestant ministers succeed in introducing themselves among these people it will be by the aid of large sums of money and Bible societies. We have only a few catholic missionaries spread over this territory vast as the ocean, and receive but scant encouragement in the Indian Missions. In Europe it is frequently given out as a final opinion that the savage peoples of the U. S. are not widely dispersed. This is an error which passes from mouth to mouth and soon is looked upon as an incontestable truth by the whole world.

The Rev. Father de Smet in a letter of October 5th, 1845, writes: "The great Indian district of the United States (if I may so speak) is the

only one deprived of spiritual succor and the way of Eternal life ; it contains several hundred thousand savages between the Missions of the Rocky Mountains all deprived of spiritual consolation. Everywhere the priest travels he is received with open arms in the midst of these tribes, alas how sadly neglected and forgotten!" Since that time a little has been done ; some few missionaries have been sent and some aid given ; but it is however a poor mission and seems to excite scant sympathy.

Pokagon seeing himself delivered from the presence of the vexatious preacher, journeyed to Detroit to request a black-robe of the Catholic bishop. His lordship listened with pleasure and sweetness to the message of the savage and promised he should not be forgotten. The chief having returned awaited impatiently for two years the arrival of the missionary. The people began to murmur and reproach the old chief for having dismissed the protestant preacher. Pokagon wearied by these reproaches again stood by

the bishop's side to say: "Great Black robe Kijemakrakonia, neither do our people of the forest in any way deceive, nor will I believe on the other hand that the chief of the Black Robes who speaks with the Great Spirit is capable, of betraying us like other white men who with lying tongues speak against their convictions"; the bishop justified his conduct by pointing out to him that he did not have a sufficient number of priests up to this time for his immense diocese, and that he could not personally provide for the different places, sending in demands of a similar nature. The faith of the poor pagan chief was however soon rewarded, as some weeks later Father Deseille, a young Belgian priest of the diocese of Ghent, parish of Slydenge, arrived. As you are acquainted with the excellent family of this saintly missionary and as you know from his own lips the history of the Indians and consequently of his edifying life, it is not necessary for me to say, Monsieur le Superieur, that the

choice of Monseigneur was a benediction to these poor people.

Pokagon, worthy of such favor by reason of his great soul, his perseverance and untiring efforts to procure a black robe, quickly understood the merit and virtue of Fr. Deseille. When he sees this man of prayer consecrating his every moment to the instruction of his people, when he sees him devoting his days and nights with persistent zeal to the salvation of souls, and spending hours in communicating with God by prayer, he fully realizes that the young priest is an ambassador of the Great Spirit with a divine commission to convert his people. Wrought up by the zeal of the missionary he wishes to become in some way his coadjutor. Although of an advanced age, he learns with avidity the prayers and essential truths of religion and in some weeks he is able to give instructions to the more ignorant and to assist in any way possible the efforts of the missionary in preparing the Indians for baptism. His faith and zeal were edifying, for

each morning before sunrise, he mounted his horse, drove through the village and aroused the entire populace so that all might attend church and listen to the instructions of the priest.

God does not fail to hear the ardent prayers of these generous hearts who live for his greater glory and honor. The savages, edified by the life of the Black-Robe, who preached to them a religion so holy and sublime, both by his example and word, came by the hundreds to be regenerated in the waters of baptism. Not long since they had given themselves over to the most extravagant superstitions, abandoning themselves into the hands of jugglers and medicine men who had imposed rigorous fasts and scarcely believable practices upon these tribes. One saw occasionally a savage, passing by order of the medicine man, several days in a stupor or dream, because of sickness. It was thought necessary at the dictation of the juggler to withdraw from the community to fast as long as possible. When the Indian was sufficiently subdued or weakened and

could abstain no longer without danger of death, he was permitted a little nourishment and the proportion increased each day as he revived. It would take too long to enumerate the thousand absurdities which obtained among them.

These savages regenerated and reclaimed to civilization by Father Deseille afford the world a history worthy of the first ages of the Church.

— Here in the forests one hears the sacred hymns of the Church, sounding to heaven; here is that heavenly dew, grace which has fallen on those hearts so lately ferocious and has germinated new life and fructifying virtue. How beautiful is this Church ever ancient and ever new! In it we find the principle of life which does not change; or it is the tree in the branches of which the world may find shelter. Exposed to the tempests of the wicked, it gains strength and durability by storms.

Father Deseille, as yet quite young, was already destined for heaven and was not to enjoy here below the fruits of his labors. His life, as

that of the just was to be one of trials and suffering. His poor savages loved him and had made amends a hundred fold for his fatigue and his suffering, but he had to see these poor people the victims of the white man's injustice, and his fatherly heart bled at the thought of those infamous treaties, extorted by violence, trickery and corruption from the Indians. The priest in his generous soul became indignant at the impositions practiced on his people and announced in the language of conviction three significant events which have been verified to the letter.

Two men had sold their conscience and their honor to aid the government agent; they had received, as the reward of their intrigue against the savages, considerable sums of money as well as specified fertile lands. Father Deseille reproached them for their shameful cupidity. "You are rich today," he says, "Mr. B., you have a rich table, your revenue is prodigious, you have around you the display of a prince, but the day will come sooner than you think, when you will

be in poverty and will have nothing to put on your table." His astonished companions deride such extravagant language.

Divine justice was not long delayed. Mr. B. so prodigiously rich and surrounded by flatterers, launches out into huge enterprises and meets with complete ruin. You know this man, as well as I, Monsieur le Superieur; you have seen him in your mission and you have seen him reduced to poverty. This Mr. B. had as an associate in his dishonorable transactions a certain Mr. C. who was a man of considerable influence. One day Father Deseille said to him: "Pride and ambition blind you. You wish to elevate yourself on the ruins of these poor savages, but God will humiliate you, the multitude will deride you and you will find yourself an object of scorn in the country. These prophetic words had their effect lately; this Mr. C. having become insane, in an act of folly, by which he violated every principle of decency, ran nude through the streets of South

Bend. A little later he perished by a miserable accident.

Five years ago, Mr. Mousse, my interpreter, and my savages frequently recounted for me these two marvellous events and recalled Mr. B. and his family history. They also related that Fr. Deseille had frequently said that the United States would be punished, the savages would be revenged, such injustices demanded some chastisement; that they would see two presidents in the country, the states would be at war, much blood would be shed, the country ruined and finally that God would punish America. Four years ago if you recall we spoke of the different prophecies of Father Deseille; we were, up to that time, free from troubles and revolutions; our republic seemed to enjoy perfect calm; we felt it was deception; that it was like the calm which precedes a great tempest. However a storm was beginning. It has come upon us unexpectedly like a thunderbolt. That which seemed to me five years ago an imaginary fear, has now devel-

oped into a reality. Two presidents are in power, and 200,000 people have been ruined in the South.

Fatigued by the continuation of his painful ministry, heart-broken by so much iniquity, Fr. Deseille soon weakened under a fatal malady. Pressed by the severity of his trouble he consulted a physician in South Bend who did not diagnose his case properly and administered to him a very violent remedy. Father Deseille soon comprehended his condition, and said to Mr. Mousse his interpreter: "The doctor has given me a fatal dose of medicine; send to Chicago and Logansport, Indiana, for two priests to give me the last sacraments." He asked for two priests thinking that the chances of disappointment would be less. His desire to see a brother priest was so great that whenever he heard a slight noise he would say: "See if that is a priest who is coming." Day and night he repeats the same questions to those who watched by his side expecting each instant the approach of death. Their hearts were torn with fear and hope; they were

discouraged at seeing death hovering so near by. Finally after many hours of anxiety the Indians reappeared at the mission; they had only heart-rending news. One of the priests whom they visited was sick with a similar disease, the other had departed for a distant mission, the time of his return being uncertain. This was a new cross which God has reserved for our saintly missionary; there was no hope to receive the last consolations of a dying Christian; he who was most generous of spiritual consolation to a thousand souls approaches death after the manner of his adorable Master in the Garden of Olives, without any one to console him or to aid him. Our Lord touched by the saintly submission of the dying man inspired him to give a final mark of his love by drawing himself to the foot of his rude altar. Prostrate before the tabernacle he long delayed, that his dying heart might still farther articulate to his Saviour. The angels without doubt admired the ravishing spectacle of our young missionary, pausing for the mo-

ment to prostrate himself before an altar erected in the solitude of the forests. His poor children, who would soon be orphans, were grouped about him. They were in consternation and their oppressed hearts could not contain their grief so vivid and so overwhelming. Their sighs and tears gave evidence of a deep and overflowing emotion. They see for the last time their Black Robe prostrate before the altar, praying for them and recommending them to the Great Spirit. Ah! what must have been the fervor of the prayers of that heart burning with love! This last prayer was one of ecstasy so that those who were present could not understand how he could kneel so long. His love and his faith sustain him. Before quitting this earth and separating himself from those who are weeping for him, he is doubtless asking for a thousand favors and pouring forth prayers which only the affection of a father could suggest. Finally he raises himself a little and throws a last look at his people, whose eyes, dimmed with tears, are immovably fixed upon

this august and unusual sight; he blesses them and falls before the altar. This great effort brought a collapse and our saintly missionary after some moments carried into heaven his life of grace and prayer September 26, 1837.

It is utterly impossible to depict the scene of desolation, or the mourning and grief of the unfortunate savages. They have lost him who was more dear to them than the world, a father who loved them with the affection of a child. His death was a frightful misfortune; they could not think of the possibility of his loss. They were yet in a state of delusion, they could not think he was dead, they prayed and wept, not daring to come near the remains. The day following, the news of his death had spread and many people came up from South Bend to obtain information. They found the Indians grouped around the body in deep consternation, but none of them had interfered with it in any way.

"Why have you not prepared the body for burial?" asked the visitors. "But how can we?" said the Indians, "since we are not permitted to touch a priest?" They had such great respect for the ambassador of the Great Spirit that no one dared to undertake this final duty to the dead. The interpreter, who from similar motives, did not wish to take such liberty on himself, finally consented to perform this act of supreme importance and our saintly missionary was buried beneath the very Church wherein he breathed his last.

I always recall with happiness that I had the consolation of offering up the holy mass in this same Church on this same altar during the winter of 1846. This Church, if I may so call it, was about 50 feet long and was so low that one could touch the ceiling with his hand; at the far end was space for the Sacristy which was open to the winds, the altar was about 15 feet across the front. I have often found it covered with snow, and during mass, my hands not accus-

tomed to the rigor of winter in these parts, became benumbed; but I do not complain; on the contrary I think God has accorded me a signal favor in selecting me as the successor of that saintly missionary.

More than two years afterwards they moved the remains of Father Deseille into the new Church which was constructed a short distance from the other. I had the consolation to both see and touch the body which had been the cause of so many benedictions. I passed many hours contemplating this figure still eloquent in the silence of the tomb. The body was well preserved; death without its retinue of decomposition seemed to favor him, that we might have a more abiding faith. The sight affected me to such a degree that it will always remain with me as a most forceful remembrance.

Divine Providence however had pity on these poor people. Soon another priest was sent to them, a Father Petit, a young man of merit who had given up a brilliant calling in his own coun-

try. This worthy successor of Father Deseille continued his good work. The savages, still weeping over their first spiritual father who had regenerated them in the faith, consoled themselves on seeing the other Black-Robe, an envoy of the Great Spirit, possessing the same virtue and endowed with the same spirit of faith and charity. The pious missionary came up to their expectations.

Have not the Pottawatomies seemed to enjoy in peace the benefits of civilization in the practice of Christain virtue? but alas! this good fortune was not to be continued. The Indian, as the rest of men, is weak, his days are numbered and his life full of misery.

*Homo natus de muliere brevi vivens tempore repletur multis miseriis.*

As I have already said the Indians had the weakness to sell all their land and had consented to go into Missouri. The patience of the government was exhausted and yet the Indians seemed

to think themselves beyond the reach of danger; but this illusion of some years was to end.

In 1838 strict orders came from Washington to carry out the treaties; agents arrived; and finally soldiers came to drive the Indians from their country. The government demanded with rigorous scruple that the Indians carry out their part of the treaty, but did not take care to fulfil its own part of the contract. Moreover, the Indians had not yet received the 3,000,000 francs, \$600,000 owed them for 30 years by the government.

Pokagon had stipulated that the sum of \$70,000.00 should remain in the hands of the government, the interest of which should be used yearly for the support of a school and the support of religion and a priest. But the government ignored both interest and principle. It is a fact that innumerable efforts were made to induce the Indians to go into the non-catholic schools, where they would receive a gratuitous education, but these schools are directed by Presbyterians who

are bitterly opposed to the Catholics. My good Indians by the grace of God have resisted all their efforts, but they have no resources for school and church, nothing to support their priest, while the protestant ministers are paid generously for their work among the Indians.

Pokagon wished a Black-Robe; the protestant minister had been dismissed with his wife and family. The Indians were to suffer. The government would fulfil its obligations, but it will be on the condition that the Indian will adopt the religion which the agent wishes to impose on him; that he should become a Methodist or a Presbyterian, it mattered little provided he discontinued his Catholicity.

---

Note:—We can see from the above what fallacy it is to say that religious training or education is an after-thought or a modern department of education. Why even the poor Indian, dug up out of the forest so to speak, demanded religious education even as an infant asks for milk! Religious education begins when the mother teaches her child to pray. Religion is not a theory, but a condition which should be made to

Returning to our subject, Fr. Petit was aware of the whole extent of the trouble when he wrote his family at Rennes as follows: "I now have a hopeless outlook, for my Indian mission is soon to be destroyed. It is a dark background to the tableau of my present life. I will console the Indians in their tears when they go into exile. I will see the destruction of their Altar and their Church. I will erect a cross over their tombs that these saintly mounds may not be desecrated by heretical profanations. Then it will be necessary to say adieu to them for they will never return, those whom I love and who love me so

---

confront the creature all through life. Religion is the adhesive element which with the flowing liquid-like grace of God, binds the various potencies of life solidly together into a structure at once spiritual and useful. It avails nothing to say there are bad Catholics, not any more than to say there are bad lawyers and bad physicians. A doctor who is not true to his profession is a contradiction. A bad Catholic is a contradiction. If he is a Catholic, he is not bad, and if bad he is not a Catholic.

much!!! God alone knows the sufferings of my heart!"

"Then the Black-Robe chief, the Prophet  
Told his message to the people,  
Told the purport of his mission,  
Told them of the Virgin Mary  
And her blessed Son the Saviour,  
How in distant lands and ages,  
He had lived on earth as we do,  
How He fasted, prayed and labored;  
How the Jews the tribe accursed,  
Mocked Him, scourged Him, crushed Him,  
How He rose from where they laid Him  
Walked again with His disciples  
And ascended into Heaven."

"I will send a Prophet to you  
A Deliverer of the nations,  
Who shall guide you and shall teach you,  
Who shall toil and suffer with you.  
If you listen to His counsels,  
You will multiply and prosper;  
If His warnings pass undeeded,  
You will fade away and perish."

*Hiawatha.*

The following selection from the "Memoirs of Bishop Bruté by Bishop Bayley" will be found of historical service. The book is to be found in the library of St. Mary's College Notre Dame, Ind. TRANSLATOR.

"From Chicago we went around the end of Lake Michigan to the river St. Joseph and the mission of the Rev. Mr. De Seille at the Indian Village of Pokagon, situated just outside our diocese and in that of Detroit. This mission was established many years ago by the venerable Mr. Badin. Mr. (Father) De Seille has lived for three or four years at Pokagon's village. He has there, and in the neighborhood, more than 650 Catholic Indians baptized. A large number of their huts are built around the Chapel, which is constructed of bark with a Cross erected behind and rising above it, and filled with rudely made benches. The Indians begin and end their work without hammer, saw or nails; the axe being their only implement, and bits of skin or bark serving to fasten the pieces together. The room of the missionary is over the Chapel, the floor of the one forming the ceiling of the other. A ladder in the corner leads to it, and his furniture consists, as did the prophet's, of a table and chair, and a bed, or rather a hammock swung on

ropes. Around the room are his books, and the trunks which contain the articles used in the Chapel, as well as his own apparel. He spends his life with his good people sharing their corn and meat, with water for his drink, and tea made from the herbs of his little garden. He abjures all spirits, as all the Catholic Indians are forbidden to touch that which is the bane of their race, and he would encourage them by his example. I attended at the evening Catechism, Prayers and Canticles, and in the morning said Mass, at which a large number assisted. Through the Interpreter I addressed a few words to them.

On Thursday evening we arrived at South Bend, a little town beautifully situated on the high banks of the St. Joseph River. It is growing rapidly owing to its many advantages. Crossing the river we visited St. Mary of the Lake, the mission house of the excellent Mr. Badin who has lately removed to Cincinnati. He had a school there kept by two sisters who have also gone away, leaving the place vacant. The 625

acres of land attached to it, and the small lake named St. Mary's, make it a most desirable spot, and one soon I hope to be occupied by some prosperous institution. Rev. Mr. Badin has transferred it to the Bishop on the condition of his assuming the debts, a trifling consideration compared with the importance of the place.

On Friday morning we left for the Tippecanoe river and the village of Chickakos. The Indians had heard of our coming, and had sent some of their number in advance to ascertain our movements. They gave notice of our approach to others who had camped out a few miles to wait for the Bishop, and make a more worthy escort for him. The Chief Chickakos was there and directed their movements. Coffee had been prepared at a small village only three miles from the principal one. We dismounted, and sitting on mats of woven straw partook of their kind cheer. Then we crossed the river, and soon arrived. On our way Mr. De Seille pointed to a poor mother sitting on the bank with an infant

child lying in her lap who had been recently baptized and was now near death. He told me that it would be a great consolation to her if I would give her my blessing, and tell her of the happiness awaiting her little angel. I did so, and could see by her silent and resigned expression that she felt comforted.

Chickakos' Village is not so large as Pokagon, yet the Chapel is nearly as large. It is, however, without ceiling, and without a room for the missionary overhead, the mission being of later standing, Mr. De Seille had baptized about 120 persons, of whom I confirmed 16. He was to remain there two weeks to prepare many more for baptism and some for their first Communion. He said he found some difficulty in preparing the Indians for their first Communion on account of his not being sufficiently master of their language to make use of the proper terms in treating of the Holy Eucharist. He begins to understand it now, yet when he speaks to them he prefers to do so through his interpreter, a Canadian

woman born of an Indian mother, a truly excellent and deserving person. She is 70 years of age and yet preserves a strength and activity truly wonderful. She followed us on horseback, and was very ready to assist us. On our arrival all assembled at the Chapel, and Mr. De Seille introduced me to them as their Bishop, the head in these parts of all the other 'Robes Noires' (Black Robes), the name which they have given to the Catholic Priests, or Jesuits, for it is all one to them. He added that I had no one above me, on earth, but the Great 'Robe Noire' beyond the high seas, the Chief of all the Christians, in the world, meaning the Pope. He said that every 'Robe Noire' that would come to them must come as sent by the Bishop, and then be received; otherwise they should have nothing to do with them. The Chief Chickakos said a few words in reply to show that they were well pleased, and promised that they would meet together the next morning to give a more special expression to their feelings. Accordingly on Sunday morning,

having informed us that they were ready, Mr. De Seille and myself sat upon two little stools in the Chapel, and some twelve of the leading men came in and took their seats upon some of the opposite benches. Chickakos made the speech, and I was very much struck with the concluding sentence of it, when, raising his eyes and his arm towards Heaven, and then pointing to the ground, having previously expressed their confidence in Father De Seille, and in me, and their readiness to receive me as their Bishop, and their desire to show it by presenting me with half a section, 320 acres, of their land, he said that 'God, when He would return from Heaven to visit our Earth would see that ground, to which he pointed, which they were giving me, and that it would prove to Him their sincere devotion to His holy religion and the messengers he had sent to secure its blessings to them.' To this I replied through the good interpreter. We then made our preparations for Mass, and the administration of the Sacrament of Confirmation. Before

Mass six children were baptized by me. My instruction was on prayer, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost. Mr. De Seille told me that he had observed in them all such a deep sense of the eminent privilege of prayer, and the dispositions it required, such as are not found, as often as they should be, among the best instructed Christians of more favored countries. I saw most unequivocal evidence of it in their behavior in the Chapel, and the affecting, earnest way in which they listened to the instructions, repeated their prayers, and sang their hymns, and I was very much edified. Of the 16 that I confirmed, one was an old Chief who since his baptism had led such an innocent life, that he had not been observed to commit any fault, or give way to impatience, or any other imperfection.

We slept on the benches of the Chapel and some of the straw from the floor, wrapped up in our great coats after the manner of the good Father De Seille. Our food was boiled corn, fish, venison, and wild turkey, minced together

in one dish, and some cranberries broken and mixed with sugar. Our drink was water. Coffee was not to be had although this was the principal village.

In the afternoon Vespers were sung in Ottawa, and as I should have mentioned before, by the aid of printed books. Many used them, as they are very quick in learning to read, and have retentive memories. Some knew the whole contents of their Prayer books. They contain all the usual daily prayers, and exercises for Confession and Communion, a pretty long Catechism, and a large number of Canticles, with many of the principal Hymns and Anthems of the Church. Among others they have the 'Pange Lingua' and the Psalms for Vespers translated in Ottawa.

I was to leave them after Vespers, so before we began, they came to sign the deed of the land presented to the Church, which we had drawn up in as legal a form as we could, putting the indispensable condition that the act was subject to the approval of their temporal Father at Wash-

ington, as they call the President of the United States. Although many know how to read, none know how to write, so Chickakos and some of his friends made their marks on the paper, and two Canadian traders who were present, signed their names as witnesses. It remains now to be ratified by the President.

After a few parting words, and giving them my blessing, we mounted our horses, and were escorted for some miles by a large number, Chickakos at their head, who before leaving us, dismounted from their horses, and asked their Bishop's blessing again. Mr. De Seille was to remain two weeks there giving instructions, and preparing the Indians for Baptism and First Communion. Some time after I received in Vincennes two long letters from that excellent Missionary, giving me a most interesting account of the exercises of the two weeks which he had spent there, at the end of which he had baptized 80, and admitted 30 to their First Communion. He said that the coming of a Bishop, 'a chief

man of the true prayer,' as they called him, and head of the Robes Noires,' had excited much joy among all the Indians."

Force was now to be used and the U. S. Government sends its army. The Indian, dismayed at the sight of the General and his soldiers, terrified at the formidable appearance of the cannon and menacing bayonets, anticipating dire results, fled into the forests. General Tipton, seeing himself disappointed, fumed and frenzied; he imagines that the Pottawatomies have taken this action at the instigation of Fr. Petit and Mr. Mousse, the interpreter. He complains bitterly to Monsignor Bruté\* and requests the withdrawal of the missionary. Then he exercised his vengeance on the interpreter, by burning his house and making away with his fodder, his horses and his cattle. This spirit of vindictiveness and mal-

---

\* Bishop Bruté was the first bishop of Vincennes, Indians. At this writing, 1913, it is called the Diocese of Indianapolis.

ice, more worthy of a tiger than of a human being, satiated for a time, finally impelled the General to seize the savages who had lately managed to escape. The soldiers ran through the forests with a fury worthy of the General whom they doubtless looked upon as their model. They succeeded in seizing a great number of prisoners whom they confined in the church. These people, condemned to a forced exile, had before them the prospect of a terrible journey. The General had already made known to them his hostile dispositions and the soldiers doubly irritated by reason of their escape took revenge on them by maltreatment. This Church where they had passed happy days in prayer and in singing the praises of God, resounded now to their cries and lamentations. There they were herded in shambles and faced death. The Indians at other times so terrible in their vengeance now submit themselves to all these outrages with Christian resignation. They recalled that vengeance pertained to God

alone who would render to each one according to his deeds.

They are now to leave their prison, the order for departure is given, cannon precede them and follow them, the soldiers, bayonet in hand, escort them as if they were malefactors. General Tipton understood that in order to avoid new difficulties, he *should have the services of a priest*. He wrote again to Bishop Bruté imploring him to return Fr. Petit. The saintly bishop quickly accorded this sorrowful consolation to the young missionary and came himself to inform him. "In the morning," we are now reading in the Relations of Fr. Petit, "Bishop Bruté arrived from Chicago and came to my room in South Bend. He was very kind, offering all the consolation which wells up in the heart of a father. I was tranquil even though crushed and overwhelmed." "I departed." "The poor Indians, driven by the bayonet, soon contracted disease and many died; some crowded into the transport wagons and died therein of fever and thirst. These condi-

tions like a sword pierced my heart. The Indians arrived finally in Danville, Illinois. I found their camp a scene of desolation, sickness and death.” (Annals of the Propagation, July, 1839.)

The Pottawatomies finally arrived in Missouri, the place of their exile, but their path was marked by the graves of a great number of victims. These tombs are an eloquent criticism on a people braggart of a civilization which permits the barbarity of inhuman savagery.

Who can read without being greatly touched the strong complaint of Singowa, one of their chiefs: “We have a Black-Robe, we have built a house of prayer to Tchiktanoeh, we are dispersed; we are building another to Chichibehowedebek, our land is sold, our families ruined, our house of prayer is our prison, driven as captives even to Danville. I obtained my liberty with many others but we are now poor and death has cast us over the earth; misery follows us, pain consumes us, white men persecute us, we

are despised as worms of the earth, we are repulsed as if our bones were stripped of flesh."

The last victim of abuse and disease had fallen; Father Petit, who had followed the Indians to console them, was crushed by grief and torments of every kind; his heart deluged in an ocean of bitterness, had not long to survive. Fever slowly weakened him to a noticeable degree; for six weeks he slept upon the ground, for the most part sharing on the long journey all the privations of his dear Indians whom cruel soldiers and disease painfully pursued; the evils which they suffered he felt in his own heart as a sword.

As soon as the Indians had arrived in Missouri and Fr. Petit entrusted them to the ministrations of the Rev. Jesuit Fathers his mission was accomplished. Exhausted and sick, he received every possible care at their hands and after some weeks of repose he desired to return by slow stages to his own bishop. More mindful of returning to his bishop who very much needed

him than of the loss of his health, he departs from Missouri for Vincennes, Indiana.

But Father Petit soon discovers that he has deceived himself. On arriving at St. Louis his exhaustion was complete. In consequence of his frightful marches and the nights which he had passed lying on the ground, he had developed several wounds on his body. He died a martyr to his charity. His last moments were touching and edifying to those who visited him.

God, who wished without doubt to reward such great merit acquired in such brief space of time, called him to Himself on the 10th of February, 1839, at the age of 27 years and some months. Bishop Bruté accompanied the remains to the grave. This saintly bishop whose memory is held in such wonderful veneration in the United States, distinguished himself as did Bishop Chevrus, the first bishop of Boston, by his knowledge, his piety, his zeal and his humility. When Bishop Bruté learned that one of his missionaries was sick, he brought him near him, and

acted the part of domestic and nurse for him, doing the cooking, chopping the wood, and performing the most menial services. What a beautiful spectacle it is to see these two saintly bishops giving in an irreligious country an enviable example of humility and charity.

A great injustice had been committed: the Indians had been dispersed; the crime was consummated; vengeance was reserved to the Lord; it has not come unexpectedly and today we find it most severe and terrible.

Pokagon in spite of certain conditions in the treaties of 1827 and 1833 found himself the target of persecutions from the Government agents. He had reserved the right to remain in the country with his tribe but they wished to intimidate him and came upon him several times with an armed force to drive him West. The Government often regretted having made any concession to the chief and so had recourse to corruption. They offered \$50.00, that is to say, 250 francs, to every person who would succeed by persuasion,

fear or any species of fraud, in making an Indian join the Pottawatomies in Missouri. Twice with my own eyes have I seen well dressed men attempting to obtain this prize, by making themselves, in the language of the savages, merchants of human flesh; but all their efforts and threats failed before the innate love of the Indian for the forest in which he was born.

In the space of five months they had lost two priests and four chiefs and their tribe had been driven away. Pokagon saw himself isolated in a lonesome forest, and the remembrance of calamities which had come upon him and his people overwhelmed him. He sees far away for more than a dozen leagues on every side the land which he had sold, tilled and inhabited by people whose homes augment his vexation. The chief could not be comforted in the presence of such reverses; his life had become miserable; he ardently desired to depart from this world of corruption and iniquity, so that he might see the Great Spirit whom he had loved and served so

faithfully ever since he had known Him. His desires were soon gratified as God called him from this earth on July 8th, 1842, at the age of 62 years.

It is a little more than six years since I had the pleasure of coming among the Indians. Missionaries had stopped in their midst from time to time. Sundays they congregated at the house of prayer but there was a dense ignorance on fundamental points of religion because of this irregularity. During several months of the year they were absent hunting and fishing. I can easily see how necessary it is for the Indians to live a more consistent and regular life, to eliminate their vagabondage, to put off and avoid their grotesque habits, in a word to put off the old man and put on the new. If I had certain resources it would be easy for me to carry out all my plans, but I can not command resources, superior to those by which I am surrounded. I have neither the feathers, nor the face, nor the skins of animals for apparel, but in every other

way misery has nearly transformed me into an Indian.

Like them I have had for a habitation a hut about twelve feet square, constructed from the trunks of trees, or logs, placed horizontally one upon the other. The door was so low that I had to stoop about six inches to enter. I had the furnishings of an Indian, a small three-legged chair on which to sit, a straw bed on which to sleep and a small board, or table, on stilts on which I might eat and write. I was without a lamp or candle stick for reasons which you understand. I was not able to afford the luxury of a light. The roof of my cabin was so generous as to let in the light and even rain and snow.

In that cabin which you have seen I passed my first two years. It was neither closed nor locked but one slept tranquilly knowing he was as poor as his neighbors.

I recall now a singular remark, or rather a reproach, made to me by a non-Catholic lady, who said to me with over-much scorn,

"Why is it that all you Catholics are so poor?" "Do you not know," I said to her, "that the kingdoms of this world with their riches belong to the devil, who offered them to Our Lord if He would adore Him? It seems that the devil loves you in a special manner, since he has shared so generously with you, and in your vain glory, you despise us."

But it does not follow, Monsieur le Superieur, that I was destitute of pretention and ambition in my little Indian palace. In the long winter evenings when alone, poking the fire, I built castles. I formed a thousand different projects; I cut down the woods, I cultivated the virgin land, I obtained magnificent harvests, I built a Church. My Indians, influenced by the progress around them exchanged their feathers and skins of wild animals for hats and boots and shoes. I presume you will laugh at my dreamy reveries, but can a poor man keep from building castles in the air when he is alone through the long winter evenings? What else can he do?

And yet I never lost courage, but always hoped against hope. My Indians possessed a certain number of horses which were of little or no use to them. These horses ran wild so to speak in the forests. "Why do you not exchange these horses," I said to them, "for oxen and wagons. Why not utilize these animals, which frequently die in the woods from hunger during the rigors of winter or are stolen from you." This proposition was welcomed at the camp of Pinouwane, the son of the old chief and soon the general assent of the tribe was given.

The feathery headgear rapidly disappeared, they began to see destitution at their doors and that their only resource consisted in the cultivation of the ground as the whites were doing. I organized societies and for the first time the savage threw away his gun for the ax and the plow. I had not accomplished a great deal but I did not stand as an idle spectator of this progressive movement.

The Black-Robe must everywhere give the

example and so each morning for several months, with an ax on his shoulder he went at the head of his new regiment around the lake by shifting pathways that had never yet been disturbed by agriculture. In six months we had, so to speak, changed the aspect of the community and if progress had been made in a material way, it was not at the expense of the spiritual. For several months after each day's work, we gathered in the Church for prayers and instructions of which they were much in need.

Such labor and fatigue were not without recompense and the second year an abundant harvest crowned our efforts. One day I was surprised to see coming to my door a distinguished looking person with his suite. They had a bag half full of something stretched on a pole. This fine looking individual was none other than Pin-ouwane, the purpose of whose visit I could not fathom. But he quickly made me understand by his discourse why they had presented themselves, with what proved to be flour for me.

"My father," he said to me, "if our families can eat bread today we owe it to you. I see you are our best friend by advocating the use of the plow rather than the gun. Formerly our children wept when we returned empty handed from the chase. Today I have in my cabin abundant nourishment for them." The idle dreams of an idle man began to be realized. I had taken the first step, it was necessary to take a second.

My Indians had a peculiar habit of decorating themselves in the feathers of birds, and this practise I had ridiculed. "The Great Spirit," I said to them, "gives you proper covering. Why do you appear thus and change your appearance to that of a bird? Do fine feathers make a man?" They soon began to replace their improper wearing apparel "par le pantalon." I gave them several weeks to prepare to purchase with their furs decent and conventional garments.

A Sunday was appointed on which I proposed to admit to the Church only those who were dressed as Europeans. This innovation

which took them by surprise, gave them a submissive appearance in Church, but on leaving they abandoned themselves to their usual light-heartedness. The idea of making them look like Europeans appealed to them to be so novel, strange and comical that I could not refrain from breaking out into laughter and forming more or less grotesque notions as to the issue.

On the day appointed my new gentlemen presented themselves in grand civilian dress; you would say "with the ease and good manners of a Parisian, with the air of high society." You will think it more than exaggeration. They were embarrassed, ashamed; they laughed freely at their own awkwardness and ridiculed one another with that French gaiety and naïveness you so well understand. This first day, the ensemble seemed a masquerade by reason of its costumes. I shall never forget it. It has been associated with so much amusement, we have all laughed over it with such light hearts, that the day is never recalled except with pleasure. They soon took to

their new costume, as we see them today and you yourself recall with what grace and dignity they act. When I speak to them, of their feathers and their ancient savage attire, they laugh at their old folly and could not be induced to give up their new and exceedingly satisfactory costume.

You have often remarked, Monsieur le Supérieur, during your sojourn with these Indians, that their intelligence is more developed than is ordinarily supposed in Europe. The savage is represented as coarser, with a certain natural cunning, which is classified rather as instinct than intelligence. Such ideas, more or less superficial, open my eyes to the fact that the original American is neither known nor appreciated. Public opinion is doubtless based on certain notions which the Europeans have received of the Indian religion and superstitions. So excessive and monstrous, they say, is the cult of the savage, that his religious ideas do not reveal a great degree of intelligence. But they must remember

that the savage is yet plunged in the darkness of paganism and that man whoever he may be, who is not enlightened by the Gospel, will have foolish ideas about the Divinity. In your Europe of progress and civilization in this 19th century are there not men whom society has honored with the title of Savants and geniuses who wish to found a pagan religion on the ruins of Catholicity? I see little difference between the religion of the aforesaid Savant and the Savage. The latter is unrefined and without literature, his ideas of being and of chaos he can neither explain nor define; while your new makers of the world have the happy faculty of producing voluminous works full of utopias and dreams which are unintelligible to any one.

Meanwhile these books are devoured, thousands of men are fed on these delusions and their imagination afflicted with unnatural and degrading ailments, corrupts the heart and prostitutes the intelligence. During a trip in Europe I had occasion several times to hear from these new

leaders of materialism and agnosticism with their commonplace phraseology on the Supreme Being. I paid strict attention. I wished to satisfy myself and to be able to recall an idea and to form a conclusion from their verbiage, but their language was a jumble of words. Thousands of these idle people roam the boulevards foolishly displaying their so-called knowledge; they were men of talent and genius but now hollow idols receiving the incense of their dupes. What profound contempt I have brought into my forests for these reformers! To what degree of abasement has not man the centre of this same civilization fallen if he can not distinguish the superiority of the sublime doctrines of the Christian Revelation from such foolish dreams?

The pride of these quasi reformers has corrupted their hearts, prostituted their intelligent faculties and clouded their judgment. They have plunged into materialism and their life is not different from an animal. They desire to throw off human dignity believing that they have only

brute instinct in a superior degree. These men have become, so to speak, debauched and wish to degrade and drag down the human race into the abyss from which they can not extricate themselves. But the Savage understands his misery and, more wise than the materialist, desires to extricate himself from the darkness of paganism in order that he may know and love and serve the true God. I think I understand the viewpoint of many of the French.

It is not necessary for them to "Cross the Sea" in order to find Savages. Without departing from their own country, without going very far, they may see that same sorrowful spectacle. Around them are thousands of men whose ideas of religion are more obscured than that of pagans. Monsieur le Superieur, you have seen my Indians, you have spoken and reasoned with

---

Note:—The auto bandits had Paris terrorized in 1911 and 1912. It is estimated (1913) that there are 86,000 people leading criminal lives in Paris.

them, and you are convinced with me that their judgment and intelligence are much superior to the intellectual faculties of those brainless creatures whose only merit consists in hawking commonplace literature. The savage ignores sophistry, he does not study a vain philosophy, but he has a sense of right, a sane judgment, a facile imagination and a desire of conducting himself worthily in the sight of God, whom he knows. In a word such is my fixed opinion after all these years passed among the Indians. The savage has developed into a Catholic of esteem and honor whilst your reformers have degraded themselves and shamed their human kind.

When you have assembled the savages to hold counsel, have you not admired, as well as I, with what decorum and what dignity they gave their opinion without ever interrupting each other or deviating from the question? In our councils how many times does it not occur that we Europeans ramble and deviate from the point. The savage can serve us in this and many other ways

as a model. In his home you see no frivolity; follow him to church, in any company, in his family, and everywhere, you always see him appear with dignity; he knows perfectly how to be master of himself in joy as well as in sorrow; he has always the same composure. Now if we look at him from a religious point of view, can he not still serve as a model? I have passed happily these years in their midst. I have always seen them so pious and so devout that I have never been under the necessity of rebuking them by word in church even for the least irreverence. There is no need, Monsieur le Superieur, to tell you of their faith when they prepare themselves for the reception of the sacraments. Some among them have so great a love of God and so great a fear of offending him that they watch with the most scrupulous attention over all their thoughts, words and actions. This is the savage whom Catholicism has made. When your reformers, your deists and your materialists specify their disciples, what have they? Where do you find

them? Frequently at the head or in the ranks of the revolutionists, the socialists, and the disturbers of public order.

Cannot the Indians after they have passed through the way of trials and tribulations hope to live in peace on the fruit of their labors? The time of their trials unfortunately, is not yet passed; new difficulties must arise; they have to be driven once more from their wigwam to lose the fruit of their labor and see themselves without means and without support.

When Pokagon settled at Silver Creek the place of my present residence, he bought a section of land of seven hundred and forty acres (which they occupy today), with money coming from the sale of a section which was his own property. He had previously sold a section which belonged to all the tribe; but instead of buying immediately another section, he kept the money and bought provisions to feed all the tribe during the winter. In the spring they all settled at Silver Creek. Thus they left Indiana to pass into

Michigan. He allowed each family to choose its own portion of land, to build its cabin, and to live there in peace. The aged chief not foreseeing any difficulty, did not give any title to them before his death. The son of the chief at the instigation of a state agent, his neighbor, determined to force the savages to pay him an annual rent or else to pay the price of their supposed property. The Indians, who had always believed themselves owners of this little patrimony, were not willing to listen to those demands which seemed to them unjust. The troubles became more and more serious until wearied by these continual annoyances, they resolved to move eight leagues farther away to Nekanekkenbess. They chose Singowa for their new chief. They bought new property and each family received a portion of land with its title which left them safe from all persecution.

This Indian mission was thus broken up. Two-thirds of the Pottawatomies left in 1851.

At that same time some hundred or so Irish

settled in my mission, as if for a compensation to replace the Catholics who were forced to depart. I take care not to neglect the poor Indians so shamelessly driven away; I visit them frequently to encourage and console them.

The wife of the old chief Pokagon also lived in my Indian village. Like him she was baptized and preserved her first fervor to the end. In her last illness she prepared for death with the most edifying resignation. I, myself, was ill at the time. Several times during the day she sent to see if it were possible for me to rise and go to hear her confession and administer the last sacraments. The evening of her death, message after message was sent. I was unable to refuse such ardent entreaties. I was so weak that it was necessary to help me to get into a cart. I lay down upon a little straw and thus proceeded to the presence of the dying woman. After receiving the last sacraments and thanking me she told me she was glad to leave this world and join those who had preceded her.

All the savages love to visit those who have reached the threshold of eternity; they love to hear and meditate on their last words. It is like a sacred charge which they keep in their families.

All were eager to visit for the last time the wife of their chief for whom they justly grieved. Simon Pokagon, the youngest of the children, wrote the last recommendations of his mother and these were preserved as a precious will. He gave me a copy of the writing and here are the contents:

First word. I am going to see my dead children to whom I will be united.

Second word. It is dangerous to love this world. God has opposed it.

Third word. My children, love God with all your heart, all your mind, and all your strength. This is the first and the greatest commandment.

Fourth word. God wills to see me.

Fifth word. My children, you must all go to confession and baptize your children.

Sixth word. The Great Spirit is in Heaven, he is a good Father to us.

After having pronounced these last words she rendered her soul to God at eight o'clock in the evening, Oct. 3, 1851.

I have never seen anything more touching than the last moments of a savage.

It would take too long to relate the last wills of all to whom I have administered. It is always the same spirit of faith which animated them. What has impressed me the most is that perfect calm, admirable resignation, that ardent desire with which they leave the world to go to God. They are animated by all these saintly dispositions because their life has been entirely spiritual and wholly detached from the goods of the world. My greatest desire is to die like my savages, and be animated by the same dispositions whenever it is necessary for me to leave this life.

If my Indians are so cruelly tried I also ought to receive my share of tribulation. I have been established in this mission for so many years that

my life has been united to theirs. I partake of their sorrows and consolations, and we, if I may so speak, have become necessary to each other, and this union makes for our mutual happiness. But what am I saying, where is happiness to be found here below? Is not the world a valley of tears? Is it not when you believe you have obtained the object of your desires that a cruel disappointment comes to shatter all your expectations in order to prove that there is nothing lasting under the sun. In the month of September, 1852, I received a letter from my superiors in France which obliged me to depart immediately to found another mission in the diocese of Decca, in eastern Bengal. To tell you all the anguish of my heart when I received that news would be impossible. The breaking of the heart cannot be expressed in human language.

All my Catholics, Irish and Indian, understood the full extent of the sacrifice. They felt it keenly and the general grief only increased mine. It was finally necessary to be resigned

and say farewell which we regarded as the last. It is useless to recall to you the history of my voyage to Asia, useless to speak of the dangers I encountered on land and on sea, and the serious maladies which forced me to abandon the country after having resided there over four years.

You know already the particulars of the voyage around the world and the illness which recalled me to France to recover my health at the close of 1857.

I have never lost the remembrance of America. My affection for my mission in Michigan has followed me even to Chittagong, on the borders of the Birman empire. Frequently when I looked at the departure of the last rays of the sun, I would say to myself: "At this moment the sun is rising over my mission in the new world, they are going to their labors while I am going to rest."

Thanks be to God, my stay in France was beneficial and soon it was permitted me to entertain the hope of returning to America. Finally my

prayers were answered. I have been able to respond to those very pressing invitations, to those of Bishop Lefevre of Detroit, and all my Catholics, to return again to attend to my old missions which you visited regularly each month with a zeal so fruitful.\* With what pleasure I recall again my arrival at Silver Creek the 9th of February, 1859, after seven and a half years of absence. The remembrance of my departure, the memory of all the vicissitudes, serious accidents, cruel maladies; all these produced in my mind and heart such lively and strange impressions that I was scarcely able to believe in the reality of what I saw before my eyes. I very soon, however, adapted myself to my new situation. I met again all those whom I so heartily loved. I have been so frequently disappointed, so frequently deceived in my expectations that I fear yet that my presence is but an illusion.

---

Note:—Fr. DeNeve attended Silver Creek during the absence of Fr. Baroux.

I believe I am destined to pass a good many years near you. I hope to keep you for a neighbor and see you enjoy the fruit of your labors; but this may be no more than an illusion too.

It has been necessary for you also, Monsieur le Superieur, to make a painful sacrifice; to abandon the flourishing missions which you came to found and return to Europe to start another work still more important.

I have seen with pleasure the American college at Louvain which satisfies an urgent need of our missions in the new world. In France we have the house of foreign missions, but it is especially designed for the missions of Asia. In Rome we have the college of the Propaganda and a college for North America. But a great many young of Belgium, Holland and parts of Germany, will be able to go to Louvain without great expense of travel, whereas a journey to Rome would be too costly for a great many seminarians.

Perhaps it may be objected, that we have the

Jesuits and many other religious societies who send priests into our country. These religious societies devote themselves to the propagation of the Gospel with admirable zeal; but the majority of their members consecrate their lives to the education of the young or to conducting retreats; a small number are occupied exclusively in the government of a parish. Frequently a bishop gives a religious community the care of many parishes which are not too far from their houses. They go to these parishes on Sunday but return directly to their headquarters after having performed the functions of their ministry. A missionary, who is only able to pass through, so to speak, will be only a traveller, not a parish priest.

Secular priests have also been sent by the bishop who visited a great number of missions from time to time, but all those visits do not satisfy the needs of the people. It requires a resident priest to accomplish any solid and permanent good. Besides the administration of the Sacraments and instructions, schools under the

surveillance of the pastor are necessary. It is sometimes important to regulate family difficulties, console those who are in pain, visit the sick, and perform other works of charity which the non-resident missionary will not be able to perform.

So the religious communities of Europe have an especial mission to perform as the parish priest has his own. America has need of communities and parish priests to work for the preservation and propagation of the Gospel. Catholics here are continually in contact with Protestants. It is more necessary than in Europe to have a resident priest, in order to clear away the doubts of Catholics, to settle the objections, which they hear and preserve them from the continual danger of letting themselves be won over by pernicious insinuations. For the past sixteen years that I have been in Protestant countries I have been consulted a thousand times by my Catholics who frequently demand the solutions of the objections which they hear.

The bishops have understood the necessity and they have wisely determined to have an establishment in Europe to educate and train priests for their dioceses. It is without doubt a difficult work, you have encountered obstacles, but you have the encouragement of our bishops and the bishops of Belgium; you have the confidence of all who know you and the good wishes of all those who desire the greater glory and honor of God. We wonder at the large number of missionaries sent out and the number of seminarians in preparation. We pray God to give you increased facilities so that you may not have to neglect any worthy vocations.

Belgium seems destined by divine Providence to assume a large share in the propagation of the Gospel in these western missions of the new world. In several dioceses, and in Michigan in particular, the most of the Clergy are Belgians. The Very Rev. Father de Smet, so justly celebrated for his work among the Savages of America is also from Belgium, as well as a great number of Jesuit Fathers who accompanied him.

Your country has also given us our bishop of Detroit, Mgr. Lefevre and many others distinguished for zeal and piety.

The American College of Lauvain will be, I hope, in the designs of God a means destined to accomplish wonderful things with us and God can not fail to bless a country so generous in its work for the missions. How consoling it is to see your missionary putting forth such wonderful efforts to counterbalance the work of satan.

Before your departure from America you saw the plan of the Church which I contemplated building in Silver Creek. This Church is 60 x 30 feet, and has been completed some time. On September 29, 1861, the Bishop came to bless it and to confirm 72 persons. It is a great consolation to have this Church. We lack one thing, and that is a Catholic School.

With profound respect,

L. BAROUX,

Missionary Apostolic.

Silver Creek, Michigan,

September, 1862.

Note:—Father Baroux had at the above date an efficient helper in the person of a well educated Indian by the name of Topash who became his choir leader and interpreter. The zealous little missionary also succeeded later in establishing a Catholic School in Silver Creek. One of his teachers was a Miss Julia Howard, a graduate of the University of Michigan. This same estimable and highly cultured lady afterwards taught many years in the Ann Arbor public schools and is fondly remembered today by hundreds of her pupils.

The correspondence now deals with the history of the late Civil War. The details of that great struggle are well known to all and need not be presented here.

E. D. KELLY,  
Auxiliary Bishop of Detroit.

Ann Arbor, Michigan,

August 21st, 1913.

Note:—Father Baroux whose correspondence is translated above was born at St. Michel, France, March 25, 1817. Aug. 13th, 1845, he became a novice at Notre Dame and made his profession in the Holy Cross order, March 17th, 1848. He died Sept. 14th, 1897.

By proximity Notre Dame put him in touch with the Indian missions at Bertrand, Pokagon and Silver Creek. He organized the Indian mission at Rush Lake and Saugatuck and procured money from the Society of the Propagation of the Faith for the Churches in these two places.













Date Due ✓

Mar 9 '44

① 31 '45

FEB 16 '52

MA 1271

MARYGROVE COLLEGE LIBRARY  
Correspondence of Rev. Louis Bar  
266 B26 tK2



3 1927 00113367 4

266

B26

Baroux, Rev. Louis

266

B26

tK2

cop. 1



